

Newsletter Spring 2022

Octoraro
Watershed
Association



Celebrating 55 years
of preserving and
protecting
the natural and
historic resources of
the Octoraro.

Upcoming Events (See website for details)

Open house/
photo contest dis-
play: **March 23,
2022 from
6-8 @ our new
office.**

Annual Meeting:
**Thursday March
31, 2022
VIA ZOOM**
Details to follow

OWA sponsored
Clean up:
**Saturday April 23,
2022 @ 9 a.m.**
**Meeting place to
be announced.**

Stream Monitor-
ing: Monthly
sampling runs
above and below
the reservoir.

President's Message

What a year it has been! We have continued to work virtually, holding all our board meetings and the annual meeting via Zoom. We'll be holding our annual meeting via Zoom again this year, **on Thursday March 31st, so please mark your calendars.**

In June, we bid a fond farewell to long time board member, outreach worker, and volunteer, Pat Fasano. Pat almost single handedly kept the organization going for over a decade and created our Amish Outreach Program. Pat, you are sorely missed! Peg O'Grady helped the Fasano family organize a very fitting tribute to Pat on a sunny June afternoon in Nottingham County Park, one of the few times in the year that we met in person.

In September, we moved out of our home at 517 Pine Grove Road and found a new home in the West Fallowfield Township Community Center. Thank you to the Chester Water Authority for hosting us for the past 22 years.

Our Ag Outreach, Buffer Planting, Stream Monitoring, and Amish Outreach programs continued all year. Pat Fasano would be particularly pleased that we have some implementation projects about to go into the ground in Bells Run area, where Adam Mowery, of Mowery Environmental, guided by board member Betsy Harris and working with Growing Greener funds secured by Pat, has helped two landowners successfully apply for Conservation Excellence grants (CEG) for installation of Best Management Practices to prevent nutrient and sediment from entering the streams. A shout out to the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, The Lancaster Clean Water Partners, the Lancaster Community Foundation and Stroud Water Research who provided much needed supplemental funding to support the CEG funds, and to DEP's Growing Greener Fund, which provided the outreach and technical assistance money that made these projects possible.

Working through partnerships is a continuing theme. OWA has been participating virtually on multiple committees working at the watershed and county levels including the Chester Chesapeake Community Action Plan and the Lancaster County-wide Action Plan. Both plans address the nutrient and sediment reductions required to meet the "Pollution Diet" for the Chesapeake Bay. OWA is also working closely with the Lancaster Clean Water Partners, who have a vision for "Clean and Clear by 2040" and the Chester Watersheds 2045 Plan (OWA board member Todd Pride is vice chair), which has a similar goal for 2045. Finally, OWA is also participating in two EPA-led projects: A Watershed and Water Quality Model of the Octoraro Watershed which will enable "what-if" decisions; and a Strategic Plan for the Octoraro Source Water Collaborative (specifically targeting the Upper Octoraro Watershed). All of these are multi-partner projects which help us leverage resources to fulfill our mission and provide great learning and networking opportunities.

For all those who helped us in 2021, many, many thanks. If any of our members would like to take a more active role in the OWA, and one or more of our programs or committees pique your interest, please contact me, Peg or any one of our board members. A special thanks to the Joseph Roberts Foundation for another generous donation to our operating fund this year. Their donation and our membership dues enable us to continue our work.

Lastly, thanks to Matt Kehoe, our treasurer, for keeping the books, and to Peg, who is seemingly everywhere in the background, making sure our organization runs smoothly (and keeping me on task and out of trouble)!

Congratulations to Rupert Rossetti! *By Patty Blakeslee*

Rupert Rossetti recently received the prestigious Carl S. Weber Award from the Maryland Water Monitoring Council (Maryland Department of Natural Resources). The award honors those who have volunteered their time and energy towards increasing watershed awareness, advocacy and stewardship of the waters of MD. Rupert, a geologist by training, has been involved in water monitoring for many years. His work in MD 20 years ago indicated that improvements in buffers upstream in PA will help MD tremendously. With that he joined the OWA in 2005, and was secretary for many years. Rupert then became president in 2019. He started our own monthly monitoring program which has grown to assessing 10 tributaries on both branches of the Octoraro and the mainstem, and 2 sites on the mainstem itself. In addition, Rupert's infectious enthusiasm brings people together from all walks of life. He has recruited students, schools, clubs, environmental organizations, government organizations, politicians and endless other volunteers. His tireless work in all aspects of protecting the Octoraro watershed and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay makes him deserving of this award. Congratulations Again, Rupert!



More Great Buffer Plantings and Thanks to All Who Helped! *By Patty Blakeslee*

With Covid vaccinations on board, we were able to gather together to plant buffers in 2021. Last spring 35 volunteers planted at the headwaters of Bells Run. A grant from the Western PA Conservancy supplied the funds for fencing the mules out of the stream, and then 225 trees/shrubs were planted on the 2 acres of land. We had a beautiful day and the volunteers hailed from OWA, Andrews Bridge Foxhounds, Lampeter Strassburg High School and The Stone Independent School. Blueberry cake, chips and stories ended the afternoon. In August, OWA helped the Kloss family on Union School Rd plant 75 trees on Leech Run, which runs along the bottom of their property. Another beautiful day ended in laughter, cake and Herrs' snacks. Our final project in December was restoring the buffer on the Gracie property on the west branch of the Octoraro that was originally planted in 2020. Hurricane Ida knocked down many of the trees but amazingly, we found them and stood them back up. We lucked out with the single beautiful day in a week of cold winds with 15 volunteers making short work of planting an additional 75 trees in 2 hours. OWA and Andrews Bridge Foxhound members make a great team. As usual the day ended with great snacks (Christmas cookies and hot chocolate), camaraderie and the appearance of 2 adorable dogs (Corgis). Thank you to Jim MacKenzie of Octoraro Native Plant Nursery, Penn State Ag extension, and the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay for the donation of trees. If anyone wants to join us, please contact Patty Blakeslee at peb@ueavet.com.

Tribute to Patrick Fasano and Scholarship in His Name *By Peg O'Grady*

Our beloved Pat Fasano, passed away in late February 2021. To honor him and the legacy that he created, OWA, in partnership with the Foundation for PA Watersheds, is offering a scholarship of \$2500 for graduating seniors who attend a high school in the Octoraro Watershed boundaries. Pat Fasano grew up in a densely populated part of New Jersey, but always yearned to live in big wide-open spaces. He moved to Pennsylvania after earning his undergraduate degree in Forestry from West Virginia University and had worked in the field of environmental conservation ever since. Pat has been the "backbone" of OWA and had worked in tandem with the association for over 30 years as a consultant, volunteer and board member. Pat pioneered a new and very effective strategy for communicating with farmers, and especially the Amish community, regarding best management practices in farming in order to reduce soil erosion and reduce the amounts of sediment, nitrates and phosphorus that run off the land into the waterways, the reservoir and the Chesapeake Bay. His passion for preserving environmental resources and educating people about the importance of nature conservation drove every aspect of his professional and personal life. OWA and FPW hope that the recipient of this award will use this gift to further the missions that Pat always strongly supported: environmental conservation; conscious use of current resources; and planning/implementing methods to repair the damage done to our local environment. For more information, please refer to our website.

Octoraro Watershed Association Photography Contest

Who May Enter? - This contest is open to photographers of any age. There are three age categories – Adults (18 years of age and above), Youth (13 to 17 years of age), and Youth 2 (12 years of age and under).

What to Enter? - All photographs must be taken within the Octoraro Watershed which encompasses the following townships in Eden, Bart, Sadsbury (in both Lancaster and Chester counties), West Sadsbury, Colerain, Highland, West Fallowfield, Upper Oxford, Lower Oxford, East Nottingham, Little Britain, Fulton, East Drumore, and West Nottingham, Pennsylvania and Cecil County, Maryland. All photographs must be identified by location within the watershed.

- ◆ Photographs may be color and/or black and white. Photos will be entered and judged in four categories: Wildlife – plants, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds, invertebrates, fungi (please, no domestic animals)
- ◆ Landscapes – sites, scenery, historic buildings, farmland
- ◆ Outdoor Recreation – show how people interact with the Octoraro Creek and its tributaries
- ◆ Trailcam – interesting photographs captured on your trailcam

How to Enter? – All photographs be must be submitted in two formats: digital and 8”X10” hard copy mounted on foam/hard cardboard. Digital copies should be emailed to csprengle9@gmail.com Mounted hard copies will be accepted at the OWA office, located inside the **West Fallowfield Township Building, Suite 7, 3095 Limestone Road, Cochranville, PA 19330**. Photos may be dropped off on March 14 and 15, 2022 between 6:00 and 8:00 PM each evening. If you are unable to make those dates, please contact Chotty Sprengle for alternate arrangements (contact information below). Required information should be included within the text of the email (photos sent as an attachment) and on the back of the hard copy. Information includes: 1.) photo category 2.) name 3.) address 4.) phone 5.) email 6.) where the photo was taken in the watershed. If you are unable to utilize a computer, please contact Chotty Sprengle 610-593-2808 or text 484-888-5416. Chotty will work out a means to get your photographs digitally. **All photos must be received by March 15, 2022.**

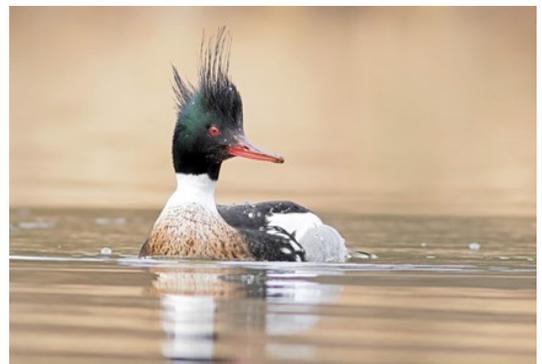
Judging and Display - Robbyn Kehoe will judge the photographs. After studying large-format photography in college, Robbyn Kehoe showed her work in local juried shows. As a volunteer, Robbyn established the first photography shows at Chester County Art Association thirty years ago and moved on to become the president of their board. Robbyn’s secret dream is to create an art center in the Atglen Public Library, where she is now the library director. All entries will be displayed at the open house at our new office on March 23, 2022, and become the property of the Octoraro Watershed Association. After the open house we will feature the collection in a show traveling to various institutions (libraries, historical society, banks, schools) in the watershed. Winning photographs will also be featured in the OWA newsletter and on our website.

PLEASE, NO PHOTOS CREATED WITH PHOTOSHOP. The definition of “CREATED” is putting something in the photograph that was not present when you took the photograph. For instance, you cannot place a moon in the photograph if it was not present when you took the photograph. Programs that allow you to enhance a photo for color, clarity, exposure, etc. are acceptable.

First Place, All categories – Ribbon and Monetary Prize (\$15)
 Second Place, All categories – Ribbon and Monetary Prize (\$10)
 Third Place, All categories – Ribbon and Monetary Prize (\$5)
 Best of Show – Ribbon and Monetary Prize (\$50)
 People’s Choice – Ribbon and recognition
 For more information, please contact Chotty Sprengle:
csprengle9@gmail.com
 Phone: 610-593-2808 Text: 484-888-5416.

2021 Best of Show

Michael Rucci, Cochranville PA



Octoraro
Watershed
Association



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Officers

President: Rupert Rossetti
Vice-President: Chotty Sprenkle
Treasurer: Matt Kehoe
Secretary: Anders Alfelt

Board Members

Patty Blakeslee
Frank Humbert
Mary Kay Phillips
Todd Pride
Betsy Harris

Newsletter Editor: pogrady314@gmail.com

Welcome to Nate Straw!

New Assistant Watershed Specialist at the Lancaster County Conservation District (LCCD) Supporting OWA. Nathaniel Straw (Nate) graduated from Penn State with a B.S. in Environmental Resource Management. After graduation, he worked on stream restoration projects as an Agricultural Technician. His passion for conservation can be traced back to his pre-professional days. Growing up, he shares that he was always in a creek getting muddy, always wanting to pick up bugs, and volunteering for any local watershed group. Through these experiences, he is looking forward to sharing his knowledge and passion for the environment and OWA is excited to work with him!



Exciting New Beginnings And Mark Your Calendars For Our Open House!

The Octoraro Watershed Association is elated that we have found a new home in the West Fallowfield Community Center.

Mailing address:

PO Box 75
Cochranville, PA 19330

Physical address: West Fallowfield Community Center

3095 Limestone Road, Suite 7
Cochranville, PA 19330
(by appointment only, just call 717-529-2132 to arrange one)

OPEN HOUSE/PHOTO EXHIBITION: MARCH 23RD FROM 6-8 PM.